

REMARKS

Claims 1-51 have been cancelled from the application, and new claims 52-89 have been substituted therefore. No new matter has been added. It is to be noted that claims 1-51 have not been canceled for purposes relating to patentability. Rather, claims 52-89 are being substituted for claims 1-51 for purposes of clarification, and in order to present to the examiner a clean set of claims which reflect all of the presently presented claim features.

During a telephonic interview between the undersigned attorney and the examiner on 07/26/2006, the various rejections of the claims were discussed with respect to the present invention and the cited prior art references. A summary of the telephonic interview is presented below. At the conclusion of the telephonic interview, it was agreed that none of the cited prior art references (including Colmenero, McAlear, and Bastiani) appear to teach or suggest a sequencing system which is able to perform automatic active port detection on a first portion of ports, and sequence only a selected portion of ports which have been identified as active ports, wherein the sequencing of a selected active port includes distributing power to the selected active port during a first time interval, and preventing distribution of power to the selected active port during a second time interval.

New claim 52 is directed to a method for operating a sequencer, wherein the method includes: performing automatic active port detection on a first portion of ports; automatically identifying a first port as an active port in response to a determination that an external component is connected to the first port; automatically identifying the first port as an inactive port in response to a determination that no external component is connected to the first port; and sequencing only a selected portion of ports of the sequencer which have been identified as active ports; wherein the sequencing of a selected active port includes distributing power to the selected active port during a first time interval, and preventing distribution of power to the selected active port during a second time interval.

It is submitted that neither Colmenero, McAlear, Bastiani nor any of the other cited prior art references teaches or suggests the combination of features as defined, for example, in claim 52 of the present application. Accordingly, claim 52 is believed to be allowable over the cited prior art of record.

Independent claims 61, 72, and 80 each define features similar to those defined in claim 52, and are therefore believed to be allowable for at least those reasons stated above in support of claim 52. Additionally, each of the presently pending dependent claims is also believed to be allowable since it depends upon a respective independent claim.

Further, it is submitted that neither Colmenero, McAlear, Bastiani nor any of the other cited prior art references teaches or suggests the combination of features as defined, for example, in dependent claims 54-57, 65-68, 74-77, and 84-87 of the present application. For example, claim 56 of the present application defines the additional feature of performing sequencing of a selected active port without transmitting data to the selected active port using a data communication protocol. Thus, in at least one embodiment of the present invention, at least some of the active ports of the sequencer are not configured to function as data ports such as those taught, for example, in Bastiani and McAlear, which are configured to provide data communication functionality.

For example, as taught in McAlear 2:60-63, conventional data ports such as those configured to implement the well known Universal Serial Bus (USB) protocol include two "data" wires for enabling data transmission and reception capabilities, and also include two "power" wires for carriage of power (e.g., one 5 volt source power wire and one ground wire). Thus, as commonly known to one having ordinary skill in the art, a conventional data port is configured to engage in data communication with an external device. Moreover, it is well known that data communication operations performed by a data port are different from power distribution operations performed by that data port. For example, a conventional data port may be configured to provide power to a peripheral device on a continuous basis during normal operations, while at the same time, may be configured to only transmit data to the peripheral device during selected time intervals.

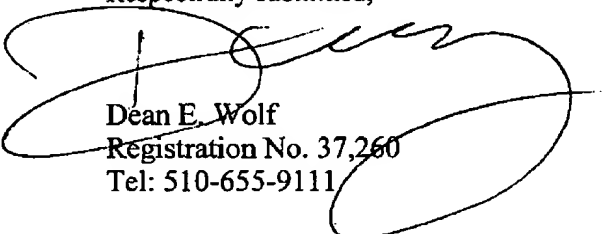
In contrast, in at least one embodiment of the present invention, at least some of the active ports of the sequencer of the present invention are not configured to function as data ports. For example, as defined in the embodiment of claim 54, the first port is not operable to communicate with an external component using a data communication protocol. As defined in the embodiment of claim 55, the first port is devoid of a data communication interface for facilitating transmission of data from the sequencer to the external component. As defined in the embodiment of claim 56, the sequencing of a selected active port is performed without transmitting data to the selected active port using a data communication protocol. Accordingly, for at least these reasons, it is submitted that

dependent claims 54-57, 65-68, 74-77, and 84-87 of the present application are allowable over the cited prior art of record.

Because claims 52-89 are believed to be allowable in their present form, many of the examiner's rejections in the prior Office Action(s) have not been addressed in this response. However, applicant respectfully reserves the right to respond to one or more of the examiner's rejections in subsequent amendments should conditions arise warranting such responses.

Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,



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